

The Strategies of Indonesian Junior High School Students in Learning Listening Skill

Alfan Zuhairi

English Department, Faculty of Education
University of Islam Malang
Jl. MT Haryono 193 Malang, Indonesia

Ika Hidayanti

English Department, Faculty of Education
University of Islam Malang
Jl. MT Haryono 193 Malang, Indonesia

Abstract

The present study addresses three objectives: 1) identifying the intensity of strategies use in learning listening, 2) investigating the inter-correlation among the strategies deployment, and 3) describing how significantly successful and less successful learners differ in the use of strategies. The accessible subjects were two hundred and fifty seven students at seventh and eighth grade of junior high school in Malang, Indonesia. They were required to complete 50 items strategies questionnaire of learning listening taken from Oxford strategy taxonomy. They are memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. The statistical result utilizing SPSS 15 indicated that the overall strategies use were at moderate level, compensation strategies were taken as the most frequent and social strategies were used at the least frequent. Then the intercorrelation among the use of strategies showed that some of the strategies interrelated positively and significantly, while some others were not correlated. In relation to the strategies used by the two groups, the finding showed that both high achievers and low achievers were not significantly different in the applying strategies in learning listening skill.

Keywords: listening skill, strategies of learning listening, successful and less successful learners,

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Introduction

One of the essential skills to concern about is listening because listening to the first language seems to easily developed, but it needs great effort to understand the listening to foreign language (Chien and Wei, 1998). Bozorgian and Pillay (2013) argue that listening is a very first skill that every learner has in their early unconscious learning; furthermore, it is important as it is put in the foreign language classroom context. Chien and Wei (1998) further state that for the listening comprehension, the students need to have various uses of strategies that lead them to be successful learners because only the skilled students in using strategies can possess easily in the listening comprehension. The use of learning strategies could identify “successful language learners who use a wide range of strategies that are most appropriate for their learning tasks” (Oxford, 1985). Emphasizing on the classroom activities, teachers should incorporate language learning strategy training in English lessons where it is ultimately can develop the students’ language skills (Yang, 2007).

There have been a great number of studies of the use of strategies in learning listening and its contribution to listening comprehension and proficiency that have been increasingly taken in the last few decades. Some of researchers investigated how strategy of learning could influence the learners’ listening skill development. The first study was from Thomson and Rubin (1996) who find that implementing metacognitive and cognitive learning strategies for listening can result positively and significantly on the students’ listening comprehension. Having been implemented 6 categories of Oxford’s Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), Li and Liu (2008) also attain positive result on the use of strategies-based instruction in the students’ listening comprehension. In different context, Shang (2008) examines the use of learning strategy by different proficiency levels of Taiwanese students on linguistic patterns of negative, functional, and contrary-to-fact statements. It was found that advanced learners deployed some strategies combination (memory, compensation and cognitive strategies) at most frequent on contrary-to-fact statements than beginner level students who highlighted the use on memory strategy on negative expression.

Another study conducted by Bidabadi and Yamat (2011) that focus on identifying relationship between the strategies use and the students’ proficiency levels. Utilizing the Oxford Placement test developed by Allen (1992), they focus on identifying the English learners’ proficiency levels. They find that there is a significant positive correlation between the listening strategies employed by advanced, intermediate, and lower-intermediate freshmen and their listening proficiency levels at $p < 0.01$ and $p < 0.05$ levels respectively. In other side, utilizing The Learning Strategy Questionnaire (LSQ), the descriptive analysis of the listening strategy questionnaire revealed that Iranian EFL freshman university students at advanced, intermediate, and lower-intermediate levels employed meta-cognitive strategies more frequently and actively; followed by cognitive and socio-affective listening strategies.

Concerning to the proficiency attainment, one of studies carried out by Chien and Wei (1998) examines the relationship between the use of strategies and the performance in listening comprehension on recall tasks. They found that there was significant difference in strategy use between two groups of good and poor listening groups. The strategies employed were linguistic, cognitive, and extra-linguistic strategies. The highest ranking group was able to exercise greater

number of strategies (three strategies), and the cognitive strategies were at most effective strategies for their better understanding.

In the following year, Bozorgian and Pillay (2013) investigate the use of listening strategy instruction delivered in first language (L1) and its effect on the lower intermediate level of Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' listening comprehension. There were five learning strategies deployed: guessing, making inferences, identifying topics, repetition and note-taking along with the pre-test and post-test for both of experimental and control groups. Within 14 weeks of teaching listening strategies, it was found that the experimental group attained better performance (t-value was 10.083) than the control group of learners among the strategies use. It implies that the experimental learners improved better listening comprehension by deploying guessing, making inferences and identifying topic strategies than the control group. In contrast, the use of repetition and note-taking strategies were not effective and insignificant to improve the experimental learners' EFL listening comprehension. Besides, Zuhairi and Hidayanti (2014) also find that the use of three most influenced strategies of resources-processing, compensation and input-output processing strategies contributed effectively and significantly to the students' listening proficiency.

Among the previous studies, it has not been clear yet the use of learning strategy for listening comprehension in Indonesia context, especially at the level of junior high school. Therefore, the current study underlying Oxford Strategy Taxonomy (1990) attempts to: 1) identify the frequency of strategies use in learning listening skill, 2) investigate the inter-relation among the strategy use, and 3) examine how successful and less successful learners deploy the strategies in listening.

Research Method

The current study applied descriptive and causal –comparative designs. The former design was to find the answer for questions 1 and 2 on the frequency use of the strategies and the inter-correlation among strategy category, and the later was to know the result of the questions 3 on the correlation of the strategies deployment in learning listening and its significant difference of use between successful and less successful learners.

The accessible participants were 257 of seventh and eight grade students of junior high school in Indonesia. They were required to complete 50 items of strategies questionnaire from Oxford Strategies taxonomy (1990) which was adjusted into strategy in learning listening.

After gaining the data, the statistical analysis utilized SPSS 15 (Pallant, 2005). The descriptive analysis was directed on investigation on how many times did the students implement the strategies in learning listening and the inter-correlation between using one to another strategy employed by the students. The intensity of use is interpreted as being high if the mean score of use is between 3.45 and 5.00, medium if it is between 2.45 and 3.44, and low if it is between 1.00 and 2.44 (Oxford, 1990). The correlation analysis investigated the intensity of listening strategies factors used by the students. The Independent sample t-test was used to determine whether there is significant difference in the learning strategies use of listening for both successful and less successful students.

Results and Discussion

Results

Question 1: How intensively do the students deploy the strategies in learning listening skill?

To answer this research question, the following table indicates the intensity of strategies use in learning listening skill and was analyzed in terms of each strategy and overall strategies. The table shows the overall strategies was applied by Indonesian junior high school students at moderate level ($M = 3.13$). This indicates that students sometimes used all the reported strategies. Further interpretation from the use of six strategies, compensation strategies were applied most frequently with a mean score 3.48. Meanwhile, social strategies were deployed least intensively with a mean score 2.77. This means that the students applied the strategies in learning listening by focusing more frequently on the use of compensation strategy rather than other five strategies.

Table 1 *The Intensity of Listening Strategies Use*

| Strategy Category | Mean | Intensity of Use | Rank of Use |
|--------------------|------|------------------|-------------|
| Memory | 2.95 | Moderate | 4 |
| Cognitive | 2.79 | Moderate | 5 |
| Compensation | 3.48 | Moderate | 1 |
| Metacognitive | 3.44 | Moderate | 2 |
| Affective | 3.33 | Moderate | 3 |
| Social | 2.77 | Moderate | 6 |
| Overall Strategies | 3.13 | Moderate | |

Question 2: Does the use of strategies in listening correlate each other?

In this stage, Table 2 describes the inter-correlation among the strategies use of learning listening skill. Having been analyzed its interrelationship, the statistical data indicates that some of the strategies employed were correlated significantly and some of them were not correlated each other. The strategies that significantly correlated with highest coefficient $r = .780$, $p < .01$ is between cognitive and social strategies, meanwhile the lowest coefficient is between compensation and affective strategies ($r = .431$, $p < .01$). In addition, Table 2 indicates that one significant correlation at the level .05 is between metacognitive and social strategies ($r = .182$, $p < .05$). Further interpretation from its strength correlations, five coefficients showed strong interrelation ($.60 < r < .80$), one coefficient accounted for moderate correlation ($.40 < r < .60$), and one coefficient showed weak correlation ($.20 < r < .40$) at the .05 level. The strong correlations were found in the pairs of cognitive and social strategies, memory and cognitive strategies, compensation and metacognitive strategies, metacognitive and affective strategies, and between memory and social strategies. Meanwhile moderate correlation is in the pairs of compensation and affective strategies. Finally, weak correlations were between metacognitive and social strategies.

As far as it is concerned, the finding of statistical data indicated six correlation coefficients were positively and significantly correlated at .01 level (2-tailed) and one correlation coefficient was correlated positively at .05 level. In other side, some coefficients were not significantly and positively correlated for some strategies deployment. This positive correlation means that the increase frequency of use of certain strategy tend to influence to an increase use of other strategies of learning listening skill. This implies that the use of one strategy category influences other strategy categories deployment.

Table 2 *Inter-Relationship among the category of strategies of listening skill*

| | Memory | Cognitive | Compensation | Metacognitive | Affective | Social |
|---------------|--------|-----------|--------------|---------------|-----------|--------|
| Memory | 1 | | | | | |
| Cognitive | .757** | 1 | | | | |
| Compensation | .080 | -.008 | 1 | | | |
| Metacognitive | .020 | -.054 | .671** | 1 | | |
| Affective | -.065 | -.102 | .431** | .654** | 1 | |
| Social | .622** | .780** | .091 | .182* | .138 | 1 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Question 3: Is there any difference in the use of strategies in learning listening skill by successful and less successful learners?

To know the comparison of the use of strategies in learning listening skill, the independent sample t-test result is described in Table 3. It can be interpreted from the table that the difference use of strategies in listening skill by both successful and less successful learners range from .18 (the lowest difference) for social strategies to .63 (the highest difference) for the use of cognitive strategies. In other side, the statistical data in Table 3 also reveals that there are strategies showing no significant difference applied by both groups where the less successful learners accounted for higher mean than the successful learners. This finding implies that successful learners deployed the strategies in learning listening not significantly different from the less successful learners.

Table 3 *The difference in the use of strategies of learning listening skill by successful (N=134) and less successful learners (N=47)*

| Strategy Categories | Groups | Mean | Mean Difference | t-value |
|---------------------|-----------------|------|-----------------|---------|
| Memory | Successful | 3.01 | .36 | 2.469 |
| | less successful | 2.68 | | |
| Cognitive | Successful | 2.95 | .63 | 3.400 |
| | less successful | 2.33 | | |
| Compensation | Successful | 3.45 | -.13 | -1.173 |
| | less successful | 3.57 | | |
| Metacognitive | Successful | 3.36 | -.30 | -3.812 |
| | Less successful | 3.66 | | |

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|------|------|--------|
| Affective | Successful | 3.26 | -.29 | -2.270 |
| | Less successful | 3.54 | | |
| Social | Successful | 2.81 | .18 | 1.301 |
| | Less successful | 2.64 | | |

Discussion

Having been stated previously, the present study is aimed at knowing the frequency use of strategies, the correlation among the strategies deployment, and identifying its use by high and low achievers. The statistical result on the intensity of the strategies use indicates that the overall use are at moderate level. This means that the students sometimes apply these strategies in listening. Among six strategies, compensation strategies are mostly deployed by the learners, and the least frequently employed are social strategies. This implies that learners choose more deployment on the compensation strategies than the other strategies in learning listening. These compensation strategies involve the strategies of refocusing on the aural input in the second time and guessing the meaning of the new words contextually. In relation to the previous studies, this finding is in line with Li and Liu (2008) that compensation strategies suggest at most the frequent use for developing listening comprehension. Similarly, it also supports the study conducted by Shang (2008) that compensation strategies is one of the most intensive strategies used by Taiwanese students.

In terms of correlation, the statistical result shows that some of the strategies employed correlate significantly but some of them do not correlate each other. This reveals that six correlation coefficients correlate positively and significantly at .01 level (2-tailed) and one correlation coefficient does not correlate significantly at .05 level. In other side, some coefficients correlate significantly and positively for some strategies deployment. This positive correlation means that the increase frequency of use of certain strategy tend to influence to an increase use of other strategies of learning listening skill.

Concerning the correlation on the use of strategies in listening, this finding supports Bidabadi and Yamat (2011) who find that the use of strategies has a significantly positive correlation between the listening strategies of metacognitive and cognitive strategies employed by advanced, intermediate, and lower-intermediate students. Similarly, this also in line with Hidayanti (2013) who identifies that compensation strategies is utilized mostly by Indonesian students.

Furthermore, the finding also shows that there is no significant difference in the use of learning strategy in learning listening skill by less successful learners accounted for higher mean than the successful learners. This finding implies that successful learners deploy the strategies in learning listening not significantly different from the less successful learners. However, this result is not in line with Bidabadi and Yamat (2011) and Shang (2008) that the use of strategies has significant different of use by advanced, intermediate and lower-intermediate levels of learners. Such findings might be reasonable due to the different student's ability as they have been learning English for two years after graduating from elementary school.

Despite this insignificant difference, both successful and less successful learners of the current study use strategies ranging from .18 (the lowest difference) for social strategies to .63 (the highest difference) for the use of cognitive strategies. Such finding support the previous

research result (Thomson & Rubin, 1996; Li & Liu, 2008; Shang, 2008); that the use of cognitive gives and plays positively influencing to the students' listening comprehension attainment. This finding also confirms the other study conducted by Bidabadi and Yamat (2011) who find that the Iranian EFL freshmen university students of advanced, intermediate and lower-intermediate levels deploy cognitive strategies more than socio-affective strategies.

Another previous study which is against to the finding of this study carries by Chien and Wei (1998) who find that there is significant difference in strategy use between two groups of good and poor listening groups. The strategies employed are linguistic, cognitive, and extra-linguistic strategies. Meanwhile, the use of cognitive strategies as the most effective use by good learners is not different from this study that successful learners applied cognitive strategies with highest mean score compared to less successful learners.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Conclusion

The present study revealed with the findings on the intensity of strategies use, the correlation among the use and the significant difference between successful and less successful learners. The first result on the investigation of the intensity indicated that the overall strategies employment were at moderate level. The compensation strategies were most intensively used, in opposite, the social strategies were least intensively taken by the students.

Then the finding on the interrelationship among the strategies deployment indicated that some of the strategies had significant and positive correlation and some of them were not correlated. Meanwhile, the statistical result on the difference of the strategies showed that the strategies use was not significantly different between high achievers and low achievers. Both groups confirmed the use of cognitive strategies at highest mean difference, and social strategies were at the lowest mean difference.

In relation to some previous studies, the overall use of learning strategies confirms the same result. It implies that the strategies provide positive effect on the students listening comprehension and proficiency although both groups of learners performed similar result on strategy attainment.

Suggestions

There are some practical suggestions addressed to the teachers and further researchers. The findings give pedagogical implication for English teachers to select the most intensive strategies used, compensation strategies, to be applied in terms of their teaching approach. It is in purpose of improving the students' understanding from aural input. In other side, students need to improve the use of social strategies in learning listening. This means that students are required to have more strategies for example listening to English songs or movies and listening to their friends' speaking in order to enhance their comprehension in listening. For further investigation, there should be more depth research on some of strategies deployment such as social strategies that eventually have contribution to the listening skill development.

About the Authors:

Alfan Zuhairi is one of senior lecturers in English Department of Faculty of Education of University of Islam Malang. He has been teaching English skills, Research on ELT, and Theory of Reading and Its Teaching. He is interested in doing research in the field of language learning strategy, language maintenance and attrition, and language teaching methodology.

Ika Hidayanti is one of junior lecturers in English Department of Faculty of Education of University of Islam Malang. She has been teaching English listening skill, writing skill and English for Young Learners. Her research interests are in the field of language learning strategy and language teaching methodology in secondary schools.

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